

Commissioned by Martyn Hill with Arts Council funds

PRAYERS FROM THE ARK

for Tenor or Soprano and Piano

transposed version*

Poems by Carmen Bernos de Gastold,
translated from the French
by Anthony Hedges.

Anthony Hedges

1. NOAH'S PRAYER

Agitato, ma non troppo allegro *ff*

Lord _____ what a me-na-ge-rie!

Agitato, ma non troppo allegro *f*

Be-tween Your de-luge and these a-ni-mal cries one can-not think-at all!

poco f

mf freely

The time— hangs hea-vy and long,

* The original settings were a tone higher

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f *tempo giusto*

long. All this wa - ter makes my heart sink. When shall I

poco f

mf

walk once a - gain with stea - dy feet? The time — hangs

decr. *mf*

f

hea - - - vy and long. Ma - ster Ra - ven has not re -

cresc. *f*

mp

turned. Here is your dove. Will she — find — us a sam - ple of hope?

mp

p *freely*

The time— hangs hea-vy and long, _____ long.

tempo giusto

poco f

Lead your ark to safe-ty to a point of re - pose, and let us es-cape at last, e -

poco f

mf *freely*

scape this a-ni-mal sla-ve-ry. The days—hang hea-vy and long, _____ long. O Lord,

meno mosso *mp*

meno mosso *mp*

p

lead me to the shores,— the shores of your co - ve-nant. A - men.

dim. *p*

2. THE PRAYER OF THE COCK

Allegro moderato e ritmico *f*

Allegro moderato e ritmico Do not for-get, Lord,

do not for-get, Lord that I, that— I, that— I— make the sun— rise, I— make the sun— rise!

mf suave *f* ritmico

I am your ser - vant, I am your ser - vant, But the dig - ni - ty, di - gni - ty of my

sta - tion Needs— some— out - ward show, some out-ward show, some out-ward show

f *mp* cresc.

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It begins with a vocal line in G major, 4/4 time, marked 'Allegro moderato e ritmico' and 'f'. The piano accompaniment features a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes. The lyrics are: 'Do not for-get, Lord, do not for-get, Lord that I, that— I, that— I— make the sun— rise, I— make the sun— rise!'. The tempo and mood change to 'mf suave' for the next section, which includes the lyrics: 'I am your ser - vant, I am your ser - vant, But the dig - ni - ty, di - gni - ty of my'. The tempo returns to 'Allegro moderato e ritmico' with 'f' dynamics for the final section, marked 'cresc.', with lyrics: 'sta - tion Needs— some— out - ward show, some out-ward show, some out-ward show'. The piano part includes triplets and a final flourish marked '1'.

ff

and world - ly o - - - - - sten - ta - tion. No - blesse o - blige...

f

f

3

3

3

4

2

mf suave

Ne - ver - the - less, I am your ser - vant,

mf

3

3

3

f

I am your ser - vant, ser - vant... Do not for - get, Lord,

f

3

2

3

4 1

ff

I ————— make — the sun — rise. A - men.

f

piu f

sfz

3

3. THE PRAYER OF THE LITTLE BIRD

Poco lento
mp

O — God — I don't know how to pray ve-ry well, all a-lone!

Poco lento
mp

But will You please pro-tect from wind and rain my li-ttle nest?

mp

Put much— dew, much dew on the flo-wers, lots of seeds where I

quasi arpa
una corda con ped.

mf

go. Make the blue sky ve-ry high, the bran-ches su-pple:

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It consists of four systems of music. The first system is in 4/4 time, marked 'Poco lento' and 'mp'. The voice part begins with 'O — God —' followed by 'I don't know how to pray ve-ry well, all a-lone!'. The piano accompaniment features a series of chords in the right hand and a melodic line in the left hand. The second system continues the voice part with 'But will You please pro-tect from wind and rain my li-ttle nest?'. The piano accompaniment continues with similar harmonic support. The third system starts with 'Put much— dew, much dew on the flo-wers, lots of seeds where I'. The piano part includes a section marked 'quasi arpa' and 'una corda con ped.' with a rapid, arpeggiated figure in the right hand. The fourth system begins with 'go. Make the blue sky ve-ry high, the bran-ches su-pple:'. The piano accompaniment features a more active melodic line in the right hand and sustained chords in the left hand. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, dynamics, and articulation marks.

Let Your sweet light stay late in the sky And leave in my heart this

tre corde

cresc. end - less mu - - - sic so that I may sing, *f*

cresc. *f*

sing, sing, sing, Please, *mf*

mf

Lord, A - men. *p*

dim. *p*

4. THE PRAYER OF THE LITTLE DUCKS

Allegro vivo *f*

O God give us plen - ty of wa - ter. Make it

Allegro vivo *f*

rain to - mo - row and al - ways. Give us plen - ty of

meno f molto legato

mf molto legato

li - ttle slugs and o - ther love - ly things to eat. Pro - tect all

mf

f

mf

piu f

qua - cking folk and all those who know how to swim. A - men.

piu f

The musical score is written for voice and piano. The voice part is in G major, 4/4 time, with lyrics in English. The piano accompaniment features a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes. The score is divided into four systems. The first system starts with a forte (f) dynamic and an Allegro vivo tempo. The second system introduces a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic and a molto legato instruction. The third system includes a crescendo leading to a forte (f) dynamic, followed by a mezzo-forte (mf) section. The fourth system begins with a piano (p) dynamic and a piu f instruction, ending with a final cadence.

5. THE PRAYER OF THE OX

Andante *mf*

Dear God,

mf *mp*

give me time. Men are al-ways so hu - rried. Make them un-der-stand that I

can-not go qui - ckly. Give me time to eat. Give me time to

piu p *mf*

plod. Give me time to sleep. Give me time to think.

piu p

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It begins with a vocal line in G major, 4/4 time, marked 'Andante' and 'mf'. The piano accompaniment starts with a series of chords in the left hand and a melodic line in the right hand, also marked 'Andante'. The lyrics are: 'Dear God, give me time. Men are al-ways so hu - rried. Make them un-der-stand that I can-not go qui - ckly. Give me time to eat. Give me time to plod. Give me time to sleep. Give me time to think.' The score includes dynamic markings such as 'mf' (mezzo-forte), 'mp' (mezzo-piano), and 'piu p' (pianissimo). The tempo is marked 'Andante'.

A - men.

mp *p* *pp*

6. THE PRAYER OF THE FOAL

Scherzando *poco f*

O God! the grass is so young! My hooves are feel-ing fri-sky,

Scherzando *poco f*

sotto voce

fee - ling, fee - ling fri - sky, fee - ling fri - sky. Why, then,

p

why this te - rror, this te - rror in me?

p

f

I race_____ and my mane_____ is caught by the wind,

poco f

jubilante

I race_____ and my mane is caught by the wind, I race_____

race,_____ I race,_____ I race— sli - pping and stum - bling

mf

in my joy, And I am pri-so-ner of my eyes that see too much, Eyes too quick to sieze the un-

mp

eas - i - ness that co - vers the whole world. Dear God, when the strange night

prowls round the edge of day, Let your-self be moved by my

plain - tive whi - nny: May a star watch o - ver me and still my fear.

A - - - men.

7. THE PRAYER OF THE CAT

13

Andantino *mp*

Lord, _____ Lord, _____ I am the

Andantino *mp*

p cat. I am the cat. *mp* It is not ex - act - ly that

p

I have some-thing to ask of You! *f* No _____ I ask no-thing of a - ny-one... but— *mp*

mp *p*

molto legato e suave

_____ If you have just by chance, _____ in the gra - nar - ies _____ of

mp *p*

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It consists of four systems of music. The first system shows the vocal line starting with 'Lord, _____ Lord, _____ I am the' and the piano accompaniment. The second system continues with 'cat. I am the cat. It is not ex - act - ly that'. The third system has 'I have some-thing to ask of You! No _____ I ask no-thing of a - ny-one... but—'. The fourth system begins with '_____ If you have just by chance, _____ in the gra - nar - ies _____ of'. The score includes various musical notations such as treble and bass clefs, a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat), a 3/2 time signature, and dynamic markings like *mp* (mezzo-piano), *p* (piano), and *f* (forte). There are also tempo markings like *Andantino* and *molto legato e suave*. The piano part features arpeggiated chords and flowing melodic lines.

heaven a li-ttle white mouse, or a sau- cer of milk, I know some-one who would

re - lish them. Would you, some-day, some - day,

would you some-day, some - day, put a curse on the whole race of dogs? If so

I should say A - men, A - - men, A - men.

First system of musical notation, featuring a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part includes dynamics *mp*, *p*, and *pp*.

8. THE PRAYER OF THE BUTTERFLY

Second system of musical notation, starting with the tempo marking **Moderato**. It includes a vocal line with lyrics and a piano accompaniment. Dynamics include *mf*, *ad lib., con rubato*, and *p*.

Lord! _____ Lord! _____ Where was I?

Third system of musical notation, continuing the vocal line and piano accompaniment. Dynamics include *p* and *mp*.

Where was I? Oh yes! This flow-er, this sun,

Fourth system of musical notation, continuing the vocal line and piano accompaniment. Dynamics include *poco f* and *mf*.

thank— you! Your world is beau - ti - ful! The scent of ro - ses

mp

Where was I? A drop of

poco f

dew rolls to fli - - - cker in a li - ly's

mp *poco f*

mp

heart.

mp *molto legato*

mf

I ought to go... Where? I do not know!

p *mf* *mp*

mp *f* *p*

The wind— has pain - ted— fan - cies on my wings, Fan - cies... Where was I?

f *p* *attacca*

Oh yes! Lord,— I had some - thing to tell— You. A - men.

p *attacca*

9. THE PRAYER OF THE GOAT

Allegro ma non troppo

f

Lord, — Lord, — Let me live as I will, let me live as I will!

Allegro ma non troppo

I need a li - ttle wild — free - dom, free - dom, free - dom,

1 1

4

a li - ttle gi - - di - ness of heart. and that strange

mp

mp

fla - vour of un - known flowers. For whom did You make moun - tains?

f

The snow wind? and the Springs? The — sheep — do not

mf

f

mf

un - der - stand. They — graze, — they graze, all of them and al - ways hold the

poco meno mossoe senza espressione

poco meno mosso

same o - pin - ion, and then — end - less - ly chew — the cud — of

p molto legato

their in - si - pid rou - tine. But I, I love to leap, to

a tempo primo

f piu mosso

leap, — leap, — I love to leap — to the heart of Your cre - a - tions,

cross, — cross, — cross Your cha - sms, and, — my mouth filled full of

mf

name - less - gra - sses trem - ble,

f

8va *tr*

f *tr*

tre - ble with as - ven - tur - ous de - light

8va

loco

at the high point of the world! A - - -

ff

3

8va

men.

8va *tr*

loco

ff *tr*

sfz *sfz*

tr